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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2827  
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 8112  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0177  
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2319

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 000495

SIPDIS

FOR STATE ISNCTR AND PM/ISO/PMAT (24/7)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/19/2019  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [BM](#) [KCRM](#) [KNNP](#) [LA](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE URANIUM SMUGGLING INCIDENT IN NORTHERN  
BURMA

REF: 07 STATE 162091

Classified By: Ambassador Ravic R. Huso for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Post wishes to alert the Department and Washington agencies per reftel that it has received a report indicating a potential incident of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. This report came to post's attention via a conversation with the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) representative (protect) in Laos, who also has regional responsibilities. Information concerning this report was relayed telephonically to PMAT at 1655 local time on 19 October 2009. The source provided a wire diagram in Burmese; the source provided partial translation of some parts of the diagram.

¶2. (C) Details of the incident follow:

A) Current location of material: Unknown; possibly in Government of Burma (GOB) custody.  
B) Transport status of material: Unknown  
C) Assessment of the likelihood that the appropriate authorities will secure the material: Only information comes from a wire diagram in Burmese, forwarded separately to PMAT, Embassy Rangoon and Embassy Bangkok. The information reportedly included in the diagram is consistent with a GOB security operation that could have seized the material in question.  
D) If in transit, means of transport: Unknown  
E) Intended destination of material: Unknown.  
F) Routing of material, if via multiple ports: According to the source, the wire diagram indicates that the material was routed from Tamu, in the Chin State, to Lashiu, in the Shan State.  
G) Supplier and/or origination point of material: Unknown. According to the source, the price per kilogram of the material is quoted in Indian rupees in the wire diagram, leading the source to speculate that India was the origin country. The wire diagram attributes transportation of the material to one of the 17 ethnic minority ceasefire groups, in an alleged attempt to sell the material.  
H) Type of material: According to the source, the wire diagram describes the material as &fake8 uranium. There is apparently no explanation in the diagram indicating what &fake8 uranium is.  
I) Date and time of incident: According to the source, the wire diagram indicates that the incident occurred in June ¶2009. The source reports obtaining the wire diagram around the beginning of October.  
J) Source of the report: The UNODC resident representative, who also has regional responsibilities, provided a wire diagram, labeled in Burmese, to DCM on 19 October 2009. The UNODC resrep advised that one of his Lao staff members, during a visit to Rangoon at the beginning of October, was passed the wire diagram by a former GOB official who now

works with UNODC. The UNODC resrep, who is of Shan origin and Australian citizenship, says that he can read Burmese, though not fluently.

K) If an alarm, technical information: N/A

L) What else if anything was being smuggled with the material: Unknown

M) Specific place where alarm or incident occurred: The source advises that the wire diagram was obtained in Rangoon.

Source advises that the referenced material was in Lashiu; unclear whether the material was seized by GOB or not.

N) Additional details: Post believes the UNODC resrep is highly credible. The UNODC resrep himself, however, volunteered that this wire diagram may have been passed to him in an attempt to influence the UN or even the United States. The source speculates that the GOB may seek through this wire diagram to increase foreign pressure on the ceasefire groups. The source has no idea whether the information in the wire diagram is accurate. According to the source, the wire diagram attributes handling and attempted sale of the material to a group with the acronym name &TNLS8. The wire diagram appears to include photos and cell phone numbers of persons associated with the incident. There is also a photo that purports to be of one package of the material. The package is labeled in English, but only certain words can be read clearly, including &Not For Sale8, &Government Uses Only8, &Packet8, &Weight8 and &Packed8. According to the source, the wire diagram says the asking price for the material was 5.5 lakhs (i.e. 550,000) rupees per kilogram and USD 450,000 for the total shipment. At 46 rupees to the dollar, that is approximately USD 12,000 per kilogram and 37.5 kilograms of material.

13. (SBU) Action officer at post for handling incident is

Deputy Chief of Mission Peter Haymond, reachable via 856-21-267-207 and haymondP@state.gov or haymondP@state.sgov.gov.

HUSO